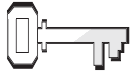


Into the Clouds and Back Again



References

Luke 24:50–53; Acts 1:1–12; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 829–835



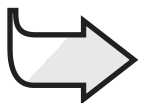
Memory Verse

“This same Jesus . . . will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven’ ” (Acts 1:11, NIV).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us and will come back.
Feel joyful because Jesus is coming back to take us to live with Him.
Respond by longing for Jesus to come and praying for His help to be ready.



The Message

I want to be with Jesus when He comes back for me.

Monthly Theme

We remember what Jesus has done for us.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Jesus spends 40 days with His disciples after His resurrection, encouraging and preparing them for their role as His witnesses throughout the world. They go together to the Mount of Olives, and Jesus ascends to heaven. Two angels come to the disciples and promise that Jesus will come back in the same way that they saw Him go.

This is a lesson about worship.

We worship Jesus when we want more than anything else to be with Him. Until He comes in the clouds, we worship Him when we crave spending time with Him daily in His Word and in prayer. Such worship prepares us for His return.

Teacher Enrichment

“As the place of His ascension, Jesus chose the spot so often hallowed by His presence while He dwelt among men. Not Mount Zion, the place of David’s city, not Mount Moriah, the temple site, was to be thus honored. There Christ had been mocked and rejected. There the waves of mercy, still returning in a stronger tide of love, had been beaten back by hearts as hard as rock. Thence Jesus, weary and heart-burdened, had gone forth to find rest in the Mount of Olives. The holy Shekinah, in departing from the first temple, had stood upon the eastern mountain, as if loath to forsake the chosen city; so Christ stood upon Olivet, with yearning heart overlooking Jerusalem. The groves and glens of the mountain had been consecrated by His prayers and tears. . . . On its sloping descent He had found a home with Lazarus at Bethany. In the garden of Gethsemane at its foot He had prayed and agonized alone. From this mountain He was to ascend to heaven. Upon its summit His feet will rest when He shall come again. Not as a man of sorrows, but as a glorious and triumphant king He will stand upon Olivet,* while Hebrew hallelujahs mingle with Gentile hosannas, and the voices of the redeemed as a mighty host shall swell the acclamation, Crown Him Lord of all!” (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 829, 830).

*Editors Note: This takes place at the end of the millennium when the New Jerusalem descends to earth. For more on this see *The Great Controversy*, pp. 662, 663.

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Heavenly Flag</i> B. <i>Life of Christ Scenes</i>	paper or fabric, crayons, markers, pencils, wooden sticks (dowels), glue, felt, glitter, buttons, etc. large box the size of a TV, paper, pencils, markers, crayons, tape
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container chalk/white/poster board
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	"TV" from Readiness B, "Life of Christ" pictures made in Readiness B (see activity for alternative), 5-10 copied pictures of Jesus, each one smaller than the other, the last only 1-2 inches tall large cloud (made of available materials) with the memory verse written on it, nylon thread, hook Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Up, Up, and Away!</i>	helium balloon (if available) and markers, or photocopy of Jesus on a cloud pattern (see p. 152), pencils, crayons, markers, scissors
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Jesus Is Coming!</i>	white paper, cotton balls, glue, pencils, pens, scissors

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Then have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- paper or fabric
- crayons, markers, pencils
- wooden sticks (dowels)
- glue
- felt
- glitter, beads, buttons, etc.

A. Heavenly Flag

Say: **When a king or president are in a meeting or visiting in another country, you usually see their country's flag too. Our story today tells about a place where Jesus is King. His country is heaven. Does heaven have a flag? We don't know. If heaven has a flag, what do you think it looks like? Let's each create a flag for heaven. Make a design that reminds you of heaven.**

When the children are done, glue their fabric or paper flag to the wooden stick. Have them wave the flags as they sing, "Jesus Is Coming Again" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 92).

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Did you enjoy making the flags? Why did you design your flag that particular way? What do you think of when you think about heaven? Do you want to go there? Our message for today is:**



I WANT TO BE WITH JESUS WHEN HE COMES BACK FOR ME.

If you mean it, say that with me.

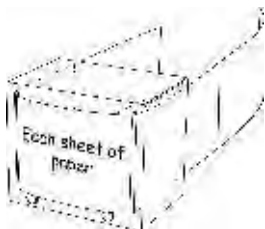
You Need:

- large box the size of a TV
- paper
- pencils, markers, crayons
- tape

B. Life of Christ Scenes

The children will prepare a "TV" program on the life of Christ for use during Experiencing the Story. Have them draw scenes from His life (see list below) on individual sheets of paper. Then set these pictures aside for Experiencing the Story. (At that time the pictures will be taped together in the order explained in Experiencing the Story.) Assign the following scenes to different children to draw now:

1. Angels proclaiming Jesus' birth to shepherd and sheep
2. The nativity scene
3. Jesus' crucifixion, cross, nails, soldiers
4. Jesus' resurrection, angels, tomb
5. Jesus' ascension as He starts to rise
(Later, some additional pictures of Jesus ascending will be inserted here.)
6. Jesus has ascended out of sight; two angels talk to disciples
7. Jesus' second coming



Also prepare in advance a "TV" box (see illustration). Cut two slits on the front of a box the size of a TV screen. The distance between the slits should be the length of each sheet of paper and a little longer than each picture which will be put in the "TV." Cut out the back of the box. Set "TV" aside for Experiencing the Story.

Debriefing

Say: **The story of Jesus is beautiful, sad, happy, and exciting. Did you enjoy drawing the pictures? (yes, no) Drawing scenes from His life leads up to today's Bible story. You are part of this story. I hope that today's message will be your biggest wish:**



I WANT TO BE WITH JESUS WHEN HE COMES BACK FOR ME.

If you mean it, say that with me.

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "Alleluia" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 16)
- "Lord, We Praise You" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 17)
- "Gleams of the Golden Morning" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 88)
- "Do, Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 91)
- "When He Cometh" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 93)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **There are many people who do not know that Jesus is coming again. Our offerings are used to pay for ways to tell them.**



Prayer

Sing the following to the tune of the chorus of "Jesus Loves Me" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 27). Write these words where all can see.

- Jesus, I praise You.
- Jesus, I thank You.
- Jesus, I love You.
- I want to be with You.*

Prepare for prayer by talking about requests and answered prayer. Ask for volunteers to pray. Then sing the song to close the prayer time.

You Need:

- offering container used throughout the quarter

You Need:

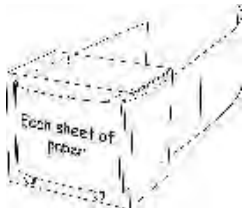
- chalkboard, white board, or poster board

*Adapted from Barbara Manspeaker, compiler, *Quick Access—Children's Ideas for Ministry* (Lincoln, NE, AdventSource, 1997), p. 22.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- “TV” (see Readiness B)
- “Life of Christ” pictures made in Readiness B (or make some)
- 5–10 copied pictures of Jesus, each one smaller than the other, with the last one only 1–2 inches tall



Experiencing the Story

The children can color the copied pictures of Jesus if they are line drawings. Now tape together all the pictures from Readiness B (or pictures you made) and the copied pictures of Jesus as follows:

Tape together pictures 1–5 in order and attach the copied pictures of Jesus from largest to smallest. Then attach pictures 6 and 7 next.

At the indicated time, operate your “TV” (explained in Readiness B) as follows: Feed your picture strip through the left slit (from the back of the box). Pull it over the “TV screen” and feed it into the right slit. Allow the children who made the pictures to add comments about them—if they wish—as their picture appears in the “TV” show.

Read or tell the story.

Say: **Boys and girls, our last five Bible stories have been about the closing part of Jesus’ life on earth. Today you have helped to make a “TV” show to review Jesus’ life. We will show the “TV” pictures as we tell His story.**

The time had come for Jesus to go to earth from heaven. Angels told some shepherds that Jesus was just born. *[Show picture of angels proclaiming Jesus’ birth to shepherd and sheep—#1.]*

Baby Jesus did not have a fancy cradle to sleep in. He was born in a barn and placed in an animal’s food container—known as a manger. *[Show picture of the nativity scene—#2.]*

Jesus grew up and started His work on our earth. He preached and healed many people. Many people loved Him. But some people hated Him. They had

Him crucified on a cross. *[Show picture of Jesus’ crucifixion—#3.]*

He was buried in a tomb, but He came back to life on the third day. Praise God! *[Show picture of Jesus’ resurrection—#4.]*

After His resurrection, Jesus spent 40 days with His disciples, encouraging them and helping them believe that He really was alive again. He prepared them for the work that was ahead of them.

On His last day on earth, Jesus and His disciples were visiting together on one of their favorite spots, the Mount of Olives. From here, they could look down on the city of Jerusalem. The city was beautiful with the marble temple gleaming in the sun.

Only Jesus knew He would be leaving soon.

The disciples had just asked Him if He was going to overthrow the ruling king and take His place on the throne. They still didn’t understand that Jesus wasn’t going to be an earthly king, but the King of their lives.

Jesus told them once more that the Father sets those dates. He told them that the Holy Spirit would be with them so they could tell everyone “to the ends of the earth” about His death and resurrection.

After He said this, He began to rise slowly into the air. *[Show picture of Jesus’ ascension as He starts to rise—#5.]* Past the treetops, Jesus rose straight up. The disciples must have wondered what was happening. Maybe they watched with their mouths hanging open as He rose silently into the sky and disappeared into the clouds. *[Show all pictures of the copied pictures of Jesus—from largest to smallest.]*

As they stood staring into the sky, straining their eyes for another glimpse of Jesus, two men in white robes joined them. They were two angels who stayed

behind to help the surprised disciples better understand what had just happened. The angels said, "Why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11, NIV). *[Show picture of when Jesus has ascended out of sight; two angels talk to disciples—#6.]*

The disciples did a good job of beginning to spread the good news about Jesus all over the world. They started a new religion based on three special beliefs: (1) Jesus, God's Son, is alive; (2) Jesus came to live on earth and die, showing us that God loves us; and (3) Jesus is coming back to earth to take us to live with Him in heaven. *[Show picture of Jesus' second coming—#7.]*

The disciples missed Jesus when He left. They wanted Him to come back soon. How about you? Do you want to be with Jesus when He comes back for you? He will help you to get ready.

Debriefing

Ask: **What was your favorite part about our "TV" show today?** (Wait for responses.)

Where is Jesus now? (in heaven)
Who knows when Jesus will come again? (Only God knows; He will set the date.)

What do you think about Jesus coming back to get you? (I'm excited; I can't wait to see Him! I'm afraid I won't be ready.) **Jesus will give you strength and power to get ready. Let's remember today's message:**



**I WANT TO BE WITH JESUS
WHEN HE COMES BACK FOR
ME.**

If you really mean it, say that with me.

Memory Verse

In advance, attach the large cloud to the ceiling (if possible) using a hook and nylon thread. Lower the cloud and read the memory verse together as you raise the cloud again. Repeat until the children know the verse.

The memory verse is: "**This same Jesus . . . will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven**" (Acts 1:11, NIV).

Bible Study

Say: **Jesus has some exciting plans for those who want to live with Him in heaven. His Book, the Bible, tells us something about it. The rest we will find out when we get there!**

Have the children who can read take turns reading a verse at a time. Invite the children to comment on the verses as they wish. Suggestions:

John 14:1–3

Parts of Revelation 21 and 22—as time and attention allow

1 Corinthians 2:9

Debriefing

Ask: **Think about what our heavenly home with Jesus will be like. What are you most looking forward to?** (Wait for responses.)

Do you think there will be some surprises there? (yes) **The Bible agrees with you.** Read 1 Corinthians 2:9 together.

Let's tell Jesus how we feel about being with Him in the place He has prepared for us. If you really mean it, say today's message with me.



**I WANT TO BE WITH JESUS
WHEN HE COMES BACK FOR
ME.**

You Need:

- large cloud (made of available materials) with the memory verse written on it
- nylon thread
- hook

You Need:

- Bibles

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- helium balloon (if available)
- markers or
- photocopy of Jesus on a cloud pattern (see p. 152)
- pencils, crayons, markers
- scissors

Up, Up, and Away!

If available, purchase a solid color inflated helium balloon.

Have the children write a message to Jesus on the balloon, such as: "Jesus, we want to be with You. Please come back quickly! We love You." Then have all the children sign their names on the balloon.

Go outside and reenact the scene when Jesus disappeared into the sky. Read Acts 1:1–11. Let the balloon float away as you sing a favorite song, such as "Soon and Very Soon" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 89) and/or "Do, Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 91). Watch the balloon until it completely disappears.

Optional Activity

If helium balloons are not available, copy and distribute the pattern found on page 152. Have the children cut it out and write their note to Jesus on the cloud part. Fold the cloud until it covers Jesus. Sing the songs listed above. Have the children take the cloud home and put it where they will see it often.

OR: Read John 14:1–3, then sing the following words to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 27):

Christ is coming this I know.
He Himself has told me so.
John 14 and 1, 2, 3—
Read yourself and there you'll see.
Yes, He is coming; yes, He is coming;
yes, He is coming.
The Bible tells me so.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

How do you feel when good friends or favorite relatives come to visit you from far away? When it's time for them to go back home? When they disappear into the distance? Is that how you feel about Jesus?

Jesus wants to be with you in person, soon. If you really mean it, say our message with me:



**I WANT TO BE WITH JESUS
WHEN HE COMES BACK FOR
ME.**

Sharing the Lesson

Jesus Is Coming!

Have the children fold a piece of 8 1/2" x 11" (or A4) paper in half (see illustration). Have them draw a cloud out from the fold (see illustration) and cut it out, but keep the fold intact. Ask them to think of someone who doesn't know that Jesus is coming again, or someone they want to remind.

Have them write on the inside "(Name), Jesus is coming and wants to take you home with Him."

Tell them to glue cotton balls on the front of the cloud.

Debriefing

Ask: **What else can you tell the person you wrote to about Jesus and His love?** (He died on the cross to save them; He loves them no matter what they

have done; He is always ready to forgive them, etc.)

Do you really want that person to be ready when Jesus comes? (yes) **Do you want to be ready to go to heaven with Jesus? Do you want anything else more than that?** (no; sometimes I seem to, etc.) **Let's tell Jesus our message:**



**I WANT TO BE WITH JESUS
WHEN HE COMES BACK FOR
ME.**

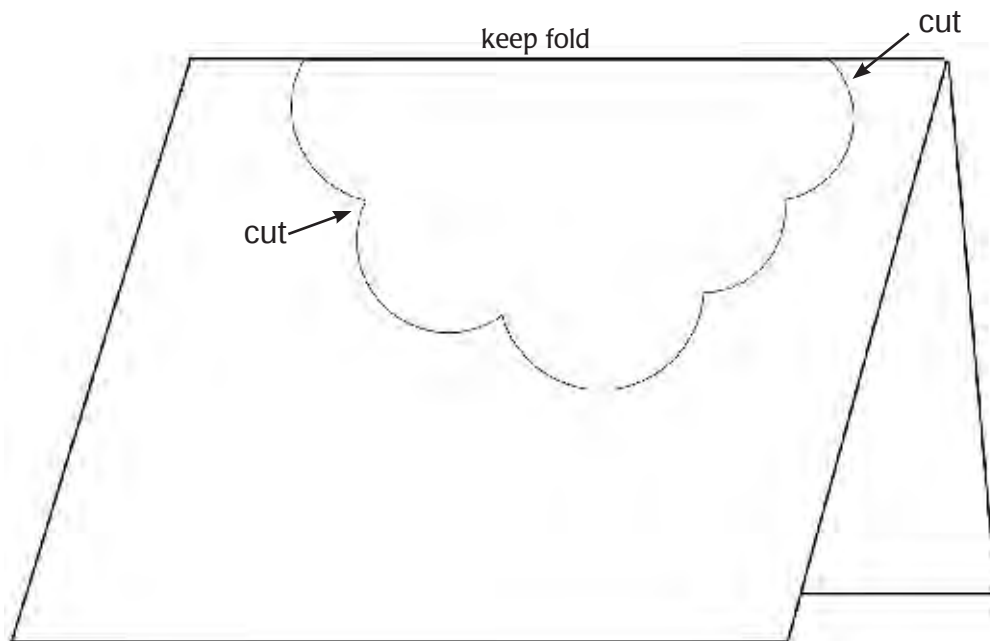
Closing

Sing, "Jesus Is Coming Again" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 92). Pray about the people the children will be giving the clouds to, and that each child will always be ready for Jesus to come.

Remind the children to use their Bible Study Guides every day and to do the daily activities.

You Need:

- white paper
- cotton balls
- glue
- pencils, pens
- scissors



Into the Clouds and Back Again

References

Luke 24:50–53;
Acts 1:1–12; *The
Desire of Ages*,
pp. 829–835

Memory Verse

“This same
Jesus . . . will come
back in the same
way you have seen
him go into
heaven” (Acts
1:11, NIV).

The Message

I want to be with
Jesus when He
comes back for me.

*Have you ever gone to an airport?
Have you ever seen a plane take off? Did
you see it grow smaller and smaller until it
disappeared? Something like that happens
in our story.*

After Jesus was crucified and came back to life again, He spent 40 days with His disciples. During that time He encouraged them. He helped them believe that He really was alive again. And He prepared them for the work they were to do.

On His last day on earth, Jesus and His disciples visited together on one of their favorite spots, the Mount of Olives. From there, they could look down on the city of Jerusalem. The beautiful marble temple gleamed in the sun.

Only Jesus knew He would be leaving soon.

The disciples had just asked Him if He would overthrow the ruling king. Would He take His place on the king’s throne? They still didn’t understand! Jesus wasn’t going to be an earthly king. He would be the King of their lives.

Gently, Jesus told them that the Holy Spirit would be with them. They were to take His message to all the world. Everyone must know about His death and resurrection.

After He said this, Jesus began to rise slowly into the air. Past the treetops, straight up into the sky. The disciples must have wondered what was happening. Maybe they watched with their mouths hanging open. Silently He disappeared into the clouds. They strained their eyes as Jesus disappeared from their sight.

As they stood staring into the sky, two men in white robes joined them. These two angels had stayed behind to help the surprised disciples understand what had just happened. The angels spoke, “Why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11, NIV).

The disciples began immediately to spread the good news about Jesus all over the world. Their work was the beginning of Christianity; a new religion based on three special beliefs:

- (1) Jesus, God’s Son, is alive.
- (2) Jesus came to live on earth and die for us, showing us that God loves us.
- (3) Jesus is coming back to earth to take us to live with Him in heaven.

The disciples missed Jesus. They wanted Him to come back. How about you? Do you want Jesus to come again? Do you want to be with Jesus forever? He will help you to get ready. Just ask Him.



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With your family, go outside, if possible, and watch the sky. What do you see? Did you see anything disappear into the distance? Read your Bible lesson together. Read and discuss Acts 1:11. What does it mean to your family?
- Write a psalm of praise to celebrate Jesus' return.
- Sing "Do, Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 91).

Sunday

- Read and discuss Luke 24:50–53 for family worship.
- Ask a family member to help you find some information about rockets and manned space travel. Draw a rocket, a space shuttle, and an airplane on one half of a piece of paper. On the other half draw or attach a picture of Jesus. Write under Jesus' picture: "Jesus didn't need a rocket, shuttle, or plane to get to heaven. I won't either!"
- Teach your memory verse to your family.

Monday

- With your family, read and discuss Acts 1:1–3.
- What kind of celebration do you think there was when Jesus arrived in heaven? Tell your family.
- Cut a cloud shape from white paper. Write the memory verse on the cloud and hang it up. Look at it each day. Thank Jesus for His promise to come again.

Tuesday

- During family worship read and discuss Acts 1:4, 5.
- What gift did Jesus' Father promise the disciples? To find the answer, cross out every other letter from left to right.
H J O Z L T Y A S C P F I Q R H I K T
- Look at your cloud and say your memory verse.

Wednesday

- Read and discuss Acts 1:6–8 for worship.

Who is the Holy Spirit? What does He give us? (vs. 8)

- Ask your parents what a witness is. Have you ever witnessed to someone about Jesus? Call someone and share your Bible lesson with them.
- Say your memory verse. Do you believe it? If so, sing "Jesus Is Coming Again" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 92), then thank Jesus for that promise.

Thursday

- Together with your family, read and discuss Acts 1:9–11. What did the angels say to the 11 disciples? _____
- Cut out a cardboard button and attach a safety pin to it. Write on your button: "JESUS IS COMING AGAIN!" Decorate it and wear it for a while. What will you say if someone asks questions?
- Say your memory verse from memory.
- Sing "When He Cometh" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 93). Then ask Jesus to help you always to be ready for His coming.

Friday

- Make separate cutouts of: Jesus standing on a cloud, the disciples looking up, two angels, and a cloud. Tape a steel paper clip to the back of the Jesus cutout. Find a thin cookie sheet and a strong magnet.
- Start to tell your Bible story for worship. As you tell each part, tape the characters mentioned to the cookie sheet as if it were a picture. When you tell about Jesus going up into heaven, hold Jesus' picture against the cookie sheet. Place the magnet directly behind it on the other side of the cookie sheet. Move Jesus with the magnet. Make Him rise to the cloud.*
- Joyfully say your memory verse at the end of your story.
- Read Matthew 28:20b. Then thank Jesus for that promise.

*Magnet idea from *Fun-to-Learn Bible Lessons: K-3, Volume 2* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, Inc., 1995), pp. 98, 99.